



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## A VENETIAN FOLK-SONG

It may be that D'Ancona is right in assuming the following song<sup>1</sup> to be welded together of three separate fragments.<sup>2</sup> But when he says it is badly welded he oversteps the mark.<sup>3</sup> The joints of a ballad may be visible after the people are done with their soldering, but it is often an ill thing to denominate what they have joined mere casual patchwork; because reasons for such assembling of parts may exist, although the critic beneath his lamp behold them not. The *volkslied* is herewith divided, however as D'Ancona suggests:

	O morte dispietata	Io gli parlai d' amore:	
	Tu m' hai fatto gran torto:	Addio, bella sora,	
	Tu m' hai tolto mia donna,	Ch' io me ne vò a' Vignone,	20
	Ch' era lo mio conforto,	Ad Avignone in Francia,	
5	La notte con lo die,	Per acquistare onore.	
	Fino all' alba del giorno.	S' io fo colpo di lancia,	
	Giammai non vidi donna	Farò per vostro amore;	
	Di cotanto valore,	S' io moro alla battaglia,	25
	Quanto era la Caterina	Morrò per vostro amore.	
10	Che mi donò il suo amore.	Diran le maritate:	
	—————	Morto è il nostro amadore;	
	La mi tenne la staffa,	Diran le pulzellette:	
	Ed io montai in arcione;	Morto è per nostro amore;	30
	La mi pørse la lancia,	Diran le vedovelle:	
	Ed io imbracciai la targa;	Vuolegeli fare onore.	
15	La mi pørse la spada,	Dove il sotterreremo?	
	La mi calzò lo sprone;	'N Santa Maria del Fiore.	
	La mi misse l' elmetto.	Di che lo copriremo?	35
	—————	Di rose e di viole.	

<sup>1</sup> Widter-Wolf, *Volkslieder aus Venetien* (1864), no. 139.

<sup>2</sup> In his *La poesia popolare italiana* (1878), p. 87, D'Ancona says: "Nella seguente ci sembrano accozzati, e mal saldati insieme, più frammenti di diverse canzoni: l'uno dei quali va a tutto il decimo verso; poi un altro da questo al diciassettesimo, e dal diciassettesimo fino alla fine, l'ultimo. Così, come vedremo accadere assai spesso nella poesia cantata è raccomandata soltanto alla memoria, si sarebbero fusi e confusi insieme pezzi appartenenti a diversi componimenti."

<sup>3</sup> Such purely subjective statement is happily passing out of fashion among Italian folklorists. It is the old school as represented by Pitre (*Studi di poesia popolare*, 1872) and Rubieri (*Storia della poesia popolare italiana*, 1877) which cannot deal with facts without coloring them.

It has long been the favorite play of leisure moments to hunt through odd volumes of German *schneiderhüpfel* or of Italian *ballate* for the as yet undiscovered sources of certain songs of Wilhelm Müller's.<sup>1</sup> There are many still to be added to the already long list of his appropriations.<sup>2</sup> In one sense this deliberate search for models partakes somewhat of the pettiness inherent in all source-hunting—in so far at least as its underlying motive may at times be nothing more than to fasten the stigma of plagiarism upon a half-forgotten poet. But, viewed from another standpoint, it is important to know as fully as we may the very last detail of Müller's gleanings from the vernacular verse of earlier generations. For he had an almost unparalleled success in melting foreign themes and forms into the liquid simplicity of his own German verses, afterwards to pass them on to Eichendorff and Heine—not even Rückert escaped the contagion of Müller's boyish enthusiasm. Of course, it was Goethe's great confession in the form of lyric and ballad poetry which made up the bible of Romantic rhyming (with its Old Testament of Klopstock and Herder—its New Testament of the Master in Weimar); but, had it not been for Bürger, we should have been spared the *schauerromanze* at which every adolescent contemporary tried his hand. Had it not been for Müller, late Romanticism would have lost that *je ne sais quoi* of transparent sweetness, that certain something of lyric simplicity and directness which so lives in its musical quatrains.

Arnold has shown Müller's pre-eminent ability in adapting Greek prototypes, and commented upon that deftness of touch

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. XIV (1899), pp. 165, 166, 213, 214; *ibid.*, Vol. XVI (1901), pp. 37, 38; *Journal of Germanic Philology*, Vol. III (1901), pp. 35-91, 431-91.

<sup>2</sup> I have not been able to ascertain what were the printed anthologies of Italian folk-songs which Müller made the basis of the collection that he began in 1818; only part of which was in the manuscript turned over by his heirs to Wolff ten years later. One has but to be familiar with the method of Müller's copying from Meinert (*Alle deutsche Volkslieder*, 1817), Ziska and Schottky (*Oesterreichische Volkslieder*, 1819), and Fauriel (*ΤΡΑΓΟΥΔΙΑ ΡΟΜΑΙΚΑ*, 1824) to be sure that it was printed and not oral material which furnished the groundwork of the songs which we know he adapted from the Italian. Further proof of this fact, if such be needed, meets one on almost every page of his *Egeria*. The long ballads and chapbook histories which occur in this book, the difficult and various dialectic verses, the villanelles, chansonnettes, and dialogues couched in impeccable literary diction, inform us sufficiently that exacter means than those of oral transmission were everywhere used. When these printed sources of Müller's songs are found—the songs which were later printed in *Egeria*, as well as those which the poet for obvious reasons suppressed—models for certain other poems of Müller's will come to light.

which Goethe and Chamisso rarely equaled;<sup>1</sup> and likewise the poet's demonstrable aptitude for rendering Italian snatches and south-German doggerel is little short of marvelous. In these fields no other Romanticist approached him.<sup>2</sup>

For the reasons above given, then, it seems worth recording that I recently came upon the source of Müller's *Altitalienisches Volkslied* while reading D'Ancona's familiar collection of Italian popular songs. The translation, as so often in Müller, is extremely close to its original.<sup>3</sup> Two verses are omitted (13, 14) as offering perhaps but a tiring repetition, a phrase or two is added (as *amore* = *Lieb' und Leiden*), but the sure and German reworking has all the lilt and color of the model. For the sake of convenient reference Müller's song is here given:

O Tod, du mitleidloser,	Lebwohl, mein holdes Mädchen!
Was tat ich dir zu Leide?	Nach Avignon ich reite,
Du raubtest mir mein Mädchen,	Von Avignon nach Franken, <sup>4</sup>
Sie, alle meine Freude!	Mir Ehren zu erstreiten;
Bei Nacht und auch bei Tage,	Und wenn ich Lanzen breche,
Beim roten Morgenscheine,	Ist's nur für deine Liebe;
Noch nie hab' ich ein Mädchen	Und wenn ich fall' im Kampfe,
Gesehn von solchem Preise	Fall' ich zu deinem Preise.
Wie meine Katharina,	Dann sprechen alle Frauen:
Sie, alle meine Freude!	Da liegt er, den wir meinen;
Sie hielt mir meinen Bügel,	Dann sprechen alle Mädchen:
Wollt' ich zu Rosse steigen,	Für uns fiel er im Streite;
Sie schnallte mir die Sporen,	Dann sprechen alle Witwen:
Sie tat das Schwert mir rei-	Wie ehren wir die Leiche?
chen,	Wo soll'n wir ihn begraben?
Sie setzte mir den Helm auf.	Im Dom zu Sankt-Mareien.
Ich sprach von Lieb' und Lei-	Womit soll'n wir ihn decken?
den:	Mit Rosen und mit Veilchen.

<sup>1</sup> *Der deutsche Philhellenismus* (1896), *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> Even the graceful Eichendorff, despite his *Zerbrochenes Ringlein*, had but ill success in his more concrete copying of popular lyric balladry; testimony of which are his *Zigeunerin*, *Soldat 1 und 2*, *Glücksritter*, *Schreckenberger*, *Lied mit Thränen*, *Die Kleine*. A detailed investigation in the popular sources and technique of Eichendorff undertaken by Mr. J. H. Heinzelman, of the University of Chicago, will elucidate this point.

<sup>3</sup> Compare with Müller's adaptation Rückert's translation of the Venetian *barcarola* ("La biondina in gondoletta") which I find in *Egeria*, edd. Müller and Wolff (1829), p. 205; or Rückert's Roman ritornelles which he had from Müller (*Rom, Römer und Römerinnen* (1820), Vol. I, pp. 52 ff.; *Egeria*, pp. 1, 2). Compare Kopisch's renderings in *Agrumi* (1838), or Blessig's in *Römische Ritornelle* (1860), or even Heyse's in *Italienisches Liederbuch* (1860). However the comparative artistic worth of these different reproductions be adjudged, none of them vies with Müller's in fidelity to its original, in the unexampled ease of transference.

<sup>4</sup> Müller's original had evidently *E da Vignone*, etc., in line 21.

Now, who will say, after reading this translation from Italian folk-song, that Müller's appraisal of his original is not more justifiable than D'Ancona's? If there be really seams in the fabric of the Venetian *ballata*, they mark but the sewing-together of a harmonious whole. None who studies popular balladry that does not know with what an intuitive sympathy the humble artist often knits together new songs out of scarce-remembered remnants. And Wilhelm Müller was ever content to put full faith in the musicality of his ingenuous model. Like ourselves he had doubtless heard *his canzone sung* from some unseen gondola across the canal, before he met with it in print.<sup>1</sup> He knew it, that is, before it was stripped of its quavering tenor note of intensity, before it was prepared for division into three parts by D'Ancona.

PHILIP S. ALLEN

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

<sup>1</sup> In comparing Müller's original with its translation and noting the greater metrical smoothness of the latter, it must be remembered that in the one the syllables have been fitted to the song, in the other the song to the syllables. In the *ballata*, that is, a line with deficiency of syllables means a sostenuto note in the air, whereas an excess of syllables presumably marks a staccato bar. Cf. Busk, *Folksongs of Italy* (1887), pp. 19 f.